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ABSTRACT

The Sierra Blanca Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Cadet Squadron from Mescalero, New Mexico, is a program funded by the tribe and the state of New Mexico for Mescalero Apache youth. The national CAP Cadet Program promotes moral leadership, aerospace education, leadership, and physical fitness; Mescalero cadets have learned self-confidence and leadership skills from participation in the program. Although many Mescalero cadets were initially shy and embarrassed when they excelled in activities, had to do public speaking, or were placed in leadership positions, some have overcome their shyness and assumed positions of responsibility in the Squadron. Other problems have been: occasional cultural conflicts between some Mescalero cadets and some white cadets from Ruidoso, where Squadron meetings take place; problematic attendance at meetings and special training events; lack of parental involvement; and peer pressure. The CAP offers alternatives to drug or alcohol abuse and encourages school attendance. Since the Sierra Blanca Squadron has no aircraft, it emphasizes emergency medical services, radio communications, and ground search and rescue activities, which are useful because the mountainous terrain and high altitude results in a high accident rate among civilian pilots. The history of the national CAP, its requirements, and its mission are also described. (MH)

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FLYING HIGH WITH CIVIL AIR PATROL:

THE SIERRA BLANCA CIVIL AIR PATROL SQUADRON

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FLYING HIGH WITH CIVIL AIR PATROL
THE SIERRA BLANCA CIVIL AIR PATROL SQUADRON

This paper presents the history, mission, and operation of the Civil Air Patrol and describes the Sierra Blanca Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron from Mescalero, New Mexico. It is felt that Civil Air Patrol is a viable program for Reservation Youth. Guidelines for forming a Civil Air Patrol Squadron are offered.

HISTORY OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

Between 1938 and 1941, U.S. civilian aircraft pilots and other "aviation enthusiasts" became concerned about the international situation. Aware of the impending confrontation between the U.S. and Axis powers, these individuals raised their voices in alarm. At this time, there were 25,000 light aircraft, 128,000 certified pilots, and 14,000 aircraft mechanics in the U.S. Many of the pilots joined the Royal Air Force or the Royal Canadian Air Force. Others joined the U.S. Armed Services. Those who could not join because of age, physical condition, or some other reason still had the desire to help. They wanted their aircraft to be put to use when the time came in defense of the nation.

Gill Robb Wilson, aviation writer, organized the New Jersey Civil Air Defense Services after a trip to Germany in 1938. His plan was backed by General H.H. ("Hap") Arnold and the Civil Aeronautics Autho-ity. The plan called for the use of small planes for liaison work and patrolling uninhabited stretches of coastline and vital installations such as dams, aqueducts, pipelines, and so on. Other states soon followed. The U.S. Army Air Corps and the Civil Aeronautics Administration instituted a civilian pilot instructor refresher course and a civilian pilot training program.

On April 22, 1941, a plan was presented to President Roosevelt by Thomas H. Beck. On May 20, 1941, the Office of Civil Defense was established and headed by Fiorello LaGuardia. Mr. LaGuardia appointed a committee to draw up a plan for a Civil Air Patrol. The order creating the CAP was signed on December 1, 1941, and Maj. Gen. John F. Curry, U.S. Army Air Corps, was designated as commander on December 8, one day after Pearl Harbor was attacked.

Among the CAP pilots in WW II were Jose Iturbi, concert pianist, John W. Bricker, Governor of Ohio, and Mary Astor, film actress.

In March, 1942, CAP began coastal patrols from 21 bases. Pilots received $8 a day and ground personnel $5 a day. Also, in 1942, some CAP planes began carrying demolition bombs and some depth charges. CAP reported 173 submarine sightings, dropped 83 bombs and depth charges on 57 submarines, flew 86,685 missions over coastal waters for a total of 244,600 hours, summoned help for 91 ships in distress, and summoned help for 363 survivors of submarine attacks. CAP sighted 17 floating mines and flew 5,684 special convoy missions.

26 CAP pilots or observers were killed and seven seriously injured. 90 aircraft were lost. On other missions, CAP pilots flew 500,000 hours and lost 30 dead by accident. CAP flew 24,000 hours of assigned Search and Rescue missions and over 24,000 of unapproved, out-of-pocket Search and Rescue missions.

Civil Air Patrol had three advantages over Army Air Force Search and Rescue Pilots:

1. CAP aircraft could fly much slower and lower than AAF planes.
2. CAP pilots were more familiar with the local terrain.
3. CAP ground search teams were able to speed to sites where wreckage was thought to be.

From 1942 to 1944, CAP pilots moved over 3.5 million pounds of mail and cargo for the air forces and transported hundreds of military passengers. They also towed targets for practice by fighter aircraft and antiaircraft batteries for a total of 20,593 missions. Seven CAP members were killed, five seriously injured, and 23 airplanes were lost.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CADET PROGRAM

The CAP Cadet Program was started during WW II. Boys and girls, age 15-17, who were physically fit, in the last two years of high school, maintaining satisfactory grades, and native-born of parents who had been citizens for 10 years were eligible. Within 6 months of the beginning of the program, CAP had over 20,000 cadets attending weekly meetings in schoolrooms and spending weekends at local airports learning about aviation.

POSTWAR DEVELOPMENT

In July, 1946, President Truman signed a law incorporating CAP as a benevolent, nonprofit organization designed to:

1. Inform the general public about aviation.
2. Provide seniors and cadets ground and pre-flight education and training.
3. Provide air service under emergency conditions.
4. Establish a radio network covering a-l parts of the U.S.
5. Encourage the establishment of flying clubs.
6. Provide selected cadets two week encampments.
7. Provide selected cadets flight scolarships.
8. Encourage model airplane building and flying.
9. Assist veterans to find employment.
10. Contribute services to special projects such as airport development.

In 1948, CAP became the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force.

CAP IN 1982

CAP services are voluntary, benevolent, noncombattant, and to be employed both in times of peace and war. The U.S. Air Force is charged with the responsibility of providing certain support to CAP. USAF provides technical information to CAP. USAF advises members who organize and train CAP personnel. USAF makes available certain services and facilities required by CAP to carry out its mission. USAF has donated aircraft, motor vehicles, communications equipment, spare parts, rescue and safety equipment, office equipment, airlift services, meeting places, parking places for CAP aircraft, and training literature.

CAP is organized into 52 Wings, one for each state and for the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The National Headquarters of CAP is at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. Each Wing is divided into Squadrons of three types: Senior squadrons, Cadet squadrons, and composite squadrons.

CADET MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Any boy or girl can become a member of CAP if he or she is:

1. 13 (or completed sixth grade) to 18 (can remain a Cadet until age 21 or become a Senior at 18).
2. In school with satisfactory academic progress.
3. U.S. citizen.
4. Single.
5. Not a member of the Armed Forces (Seniors are allowed to be members of the Armed Forces).
6. Of good moral character.

CAP MISSION TODAY

The mission of Civil Air Patrol can be divided into three general areas:

1. Aerospace Education Program.
2. CAP Cadet Program.
3. Emergency Services Program, including:

    a. Search and Rescue assisting Air Force Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service.
    b. Civil Defense assisting the area Civil Defense coordinator.
    c. National Disaster Relief Operations, including communications, transportation of injured or supplies.

The role of the Cadets in Civil Air Patrol includes Aerospace Education and of course the Cadet Program, but Cadets also function in Emergency Services. During missions, Cadets work on the flight line servicing aircraft and parking aircraft. They assist in manning the communications system and also assist operations personnel in directing the mission. They participate as members of ground teams including ground search and rescue. They cannot fly during missions funded by the Air Force.

THE CADET PROGRAM

There are five phases of the Cadet Program, with each phase having a set of activities that each Cadet must participate successfully in. These activities fall into the following categories:

1. Moral Leadership (discussion of moral issues facing the community, nation, and world today).
2. Aerospace Education.
3. Leadership (including drill and ceremony).
4. Physical Fitness.

REWARDS OF CADET PARTICIPATION

Cadets who successfully complete Phase II of the program are given the rank of E-3 immediately following basic training if they enter the Air Force. Cadets can also get special training such as the USAF survival school at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, flight instruction, and Cadet Officers School at Maxwell Air Force Base. They are also eligible to attend two week encampments at Air Force Bases each summer where they are involved in a variety of interesting and challenging activities. A small number of Cadets are selected each year to participate in the International Cadet Exchange, and they travel to foreign countries to learn about the Air Forces and CAP organizations of those nations. Outstanding Cadets are eligible to compete

for college scholarships and for appointments to the Service Academies.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SIERRA BLANCA COMPOSITE SQUADRON

The Sierra Blanca Composite Squadron was formed in February, 1982, as a result of the long-identified need for a CAP squadron in the Sierra Blanca Area. Such a squadron was needed because of the very mountainous terrain and high altitude which resulted in a high accident rate among civilian pilots. The Squadron was organized by Dr. (Lt.Col.) E.V. Stalzer, M.D. Dr. Stalzer had prior CAP experience as a mission pilot. He appointed A.J. Amos as Deputy Commander for Seniors and Gene Carnicom Deputy Commander for Cadets. Since February, the Squadron has grown to over 50 Seniors and 50 Cadets. The Composite Squadron meets monthly in Ruidoso, N.M. at the City Hall and the Cadets meet weekly at the Ruidoso Elks Lodge. The Squadron will have its first Search and Rescue Exercise (locally sponsored) on September 18, 1982, and Squadron Seniors and Cadets will run the exercise from beginning to end.

CADET SQUADRON ACTIVITIES

In addition to the regular meetings, the Cadet Squadron has participated in the following activities:

1. Trip to see the Space Shuttle at White Sands.
2. Two SAREX missions (Santa Fe and Las Cruces).
3. Two Volksmarches (physical fitness walks, 12 miles each).
4. Trip to the Space Hall of Fame in Alamogordo.
5. One SARTEST in Albuquerque.
6. Fundraising activities including a pancake breakfast, walkathon, and barbecue.

FUNDING SOURCES

Initial funding of the Cadet Squadron was provided by the Mescalero Apache Tribe and the State of New Mexico. The Wing Headquarters provided a 40 passenger bus and a 15 passenger limousine as well as 50 sleeping bags, uniforms, and other equipment. The Las Cruces Squadron provided a Single Sideband base radio station. The Cadet Squadron is currently seeking funding to buy several hand-held radios to use on Search and Rescue missions as well as training missions. Funding is also needed to buy fuel for the vehicles and to pay expenses for Cadets attending special training courses.

PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED THUS FAR

In the process of forming the Cadet Squadron, the Senior members encountered several difficulties. Many of the Mescalero Cadets were very shy and embarassed when they excelled in activities, were called upon to do public speaking, or were placed in leadership positions. Some of these Cadets overcame their shyness and eventually assumed positions of responsibility in the Squadron. From time to time, there arose cultural conflicts between some of the Mescalero Cadets and some of the white Cadets from Ruidoso. These conflicts were dealt with in the moral leadership discussion groups. Attendance at meetings and special training events continue to be problematic as CAP competes with other activities in the Cadets' lives such as school sports or church activities. Lack of parental involvement is perhaps the most pressing problem. To date, the Squadron has been unable to involve many of the Cadets' parents in the program. Pressure from the Cadets' peers has also been a problem. This included ridicule and teasing, and was one of the reasons the meeting location was changed from Mescalero to Ruidoso.

FUTURE SQUADRON PLANS

The Squadron Search and Rescue exercise on September 18 will have Cadet participation. The skills the Cadets have learned by participating in exercises with other squadrons will be applied in this local mission. ELT's (emergency locator transmitters) simulating downed aircraft will be dispersed throughout the local area and Cadets as part of ground teams will attempt to locate the ELT's in cooperation with search aircraft. By next year, the Squadron hopes to enter the National Cadet Competition held at Maxwell Air Force Base. Participation will include the Squadron's Cadet drill team. By next summer, the Squadron should be able to send several of its Cadets to the Cadet Officer's School at Maxwell AFB.

EVALUATION OF THE CADET PROGRAM

A look at the Cadet Program as it has progressed thus far should show some positive results. By participating in CAP, the Cadets have learned self confidence and some leadership skills. CAP has offered alternatives to less healthy activities such as drug or alcohol abuse, and by its nature CAP encourages school attendance. In terms of its suitability for application on Indian Reservations, CAP is an excellent resource, especially in isolated areas. The U.S. Air Force and CAP Headquarters provide a great deal of support to new squadrons. The lack of aircraft or an airport should not be seen as an obstacle to forming a squadron. Many CAP squadrons have developed which do not emphasize flying but rather emergency medical services, radio communications, ground search and rescue, and other such activities. CAP can be viewed as an excellent means to prepare Cadets for college, military service, other careers, and community leadership.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CADET PROGRAM

The essential requirement for a successful Cadet Program is effective Senior leadership. It is advisable to have several Seniors with prior military experience involved in the program. Close contact should be maintained with the local Wing Headquarters as well as with other nearby squadrons who can be of assistance in getting the new squadron off the ground. Local pilots should be recruited to offer orientation flights to Cadets (these pilots must meet Wing requirements). Expertise in such areas as emergency medical treatment, survival training, mapreading and orienteering, avionics, weather forecasting, and electronic communication should be approached to teach the Cadets this needed information. Once formed, the squadron should be tied into local Civil Defense and Disaster Relief systems.

Participation in a Civil Air Patrol Cadet Squadron can be an exciting opportunity for both the Cadets and the Senior members involved in the program. A successful program requires a minimal investment of money, but a great investment in terms of time and effort by both young and adult members. Any CAP squadron, including the Sierra Blanca Squadron, will be more than willing to assist anyone wishing to form a new Cadet squadron. We look forward to welcoming you into what we believe is one of the finest volunteer service programs in the nation.

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